

Liam Clancy (Vanguard Records)
by Peter Stone Brown
10 Stars

This was Liam Clancy's solo debut and received a fair amount of airplay on folk shows back then. I didn't get the album back then though it certainly was on my want list with a classic Vanguard cover. Among the songs that received airplay were "The Royal Canal" and "The Patriot Game." Twenty years later, I suddenly had a great desire to hear "The Royal Canal" and this album, and not finding it in the stores that should have had it, special ordered a copy. It turned out to be well worth it. While the album has a jaunty a cappella version of "Rocky Road To Dublin" with Luke Kelly joining in, it's on the ballads such as "Black Water Side," "The Convict of Clonmel," "Anac Cuan" along with the previously mentioned songs that Clancy excels. He sings to bring out the poetry in the lyrics of these songs. Not long after I got this album, Bob Dylan appeared in a documentary on the Clancy Brothers and said of Liam, "He was just the best ballad singer I'd ever heard in my life." This album, one of only four solo albums makes it hard to disagree with that statement.